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ON PAGE 2C

WASHINGTON TIMES
13 June 1984

BOOK REVIEW / Arnold Beichman

Unfriendly Soviet persuasion

The Russian phrase *glavni vrug* means, the "main" or "chief enemy." And that's the phrase which is applied by the Soviet Union to only one country — the United States. Detente-shmetante, the United States was, is, and always will be *glavni vrug*, as far as the Soviet Union is concerned.

So this credo was lived by Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov and now by Chernenko and, after him, Gorbachev or whoever. For the U.S.S.R., the United States has been the *glavni vrug*, except — temporarily — for the single occasion when Hitler's Third Reich threatened to end the Soviet Empire and it was obvious that only the United States could save the day. But even during that ill-fated alliance, Stalin never lost sight of who was the main enemy.

Since the overriding Soviet objective is to weaken the enemy, as demanded by Soviet doctrine, Soviet political-military strategy is designed to achieve that aim — without war, if possible. To accomplish a bloodless victory and avoid dangerous confrontations, flanking maneuvers become essential.

Richard H. Schultz's and Roy Godson's important book, a pioneering piece of scholarly research, deals with these "flanking maneuvers," the Leninist policy of combining trade and correct diplomatic relations on the one hand with subversion and political warfare on the other. Subversion and political warfare come under the heading of what the Soviets call "active measures."

While there are many tactical methods which exemplify "active measures," their fundamental strategic aim is, to quote Messrs. Shultz and Godson, to "distort the target's perceptions of reality." For example, if a Libyan gangster-diplomat shoots a policewoman on a London street, *Pravda* blames the killing on the British and the CIA. Or, if the Soviet Union invades Afghanistan, it is really the United States which is responsible. Or if the Soviets shoot down a civilian airliner, the plane was on a spy mission.

These propaganda ploys, however, are overt. Covert "active measures," which is what the

Shultz-Godson book is all about, or, specifically, *dezinformatsia* are techniques for manipulating target persons or groups to believe in the veracity of a Soviet-inspired message and, consequently, to act in the interest of the Soviet Union. Other covert actions would include the organization and exploitation of international front organizations, like the World Peace Council or the World Federation of Trade Unions, sponsorship of clandestine radio

**Dezinformatsia:
Active Measures
in Soviet Strategy**
By Richard H. Shultz
and Roy Godson
With introduction by Sidney Hook
Pergamon-Brassey
\$12.95, 210 pages

broadcasts or, of crucial importance, carrying out agent-of-influence operations.

The Shultz-Godson study makes three distinct contributions to the field of sovietology.

First, it has skillfully gathered and documented evidence of the techniques which the Soviet Union uses systematically to disrupt the Western alliance.

Second, it sets out the table of organization within the Kremlin of those Communist Party organs, including the KGB, which are the principal actors in executing *aktivnyye meropriatia*, active measures.

Third, and what will be of particular reader interest, are the interviews with former Czech intelligence officer Ladislav Bittman and former KGB intelligence officer Stanislav Levchenko. These former insiders describe their activities in disinformation and other active measures in and against the West in sobering detail.

It is a testament to the success of Soviet active measures that, despite the documentation this book presents, there are people who will refuse to believe that the Soviet Union is out to do us in, to put it simply.

Looking at the West European peace-marchers and unilateralists and the extraordinary numbers of agents of influence, witting and unwitting, in and out of Congress and the academy, disinformation is one Soviet industry which is more than fulfilling its objectives.

Its success will continue until supposedly well-informed Western public opinion learns to accept the truths contained in the Shultz-Godson book and acts accordingly.

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